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Subject: Moral Theory of Civil Liberty.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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MORAL THEORY OF CIVIL LIBERTY.

SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 4, 1869.

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage."—2 Pet. ii. 19.

This is a true delineation of the fact that animalism leads to despotism, and necessitates it; and the whole chapter, which I read as the opening service of the evening, illustrates that important and fundamental idea.

This day, which is our National Anniversary, will very naturally suggest my subject this evening.

There are two essential conditions of civil liberty: first, self-government, and second, the civil machinery of free national life. And in importance they stand in the order in which I have mentioned them.

Self-government is a better term than *liberty*. We are in the habit of speaking of certain nations as *free people*. It would be better to speak of them as *self-governing people*. There is no such thing as absolute liberty. It is quite inconsistent with the very creative notion which we express. There is no such thing as absolute liberty in one's self; because there is an order of faculty in every man, by the observance of which he can reap happiness, and by the disregard of which he will entail on himself misery. That this is so of the body, we all know. That we are obliged to obey the laws of the ear, of the eye, of the mouth, and of the hand, in order to reap the benefits of these organs, we all know. We can not go backward upon the organization of the body, and have health and comfort. We gain strength and bodily ease and comfort in proportion as we obey law. We are not, therefore, free physically, in regard to the body; and just as little are we free mentally; for there is an order within, which is as real, and the observance of which is as indispensable to comfort and liberty, as the order of the body and its physical organization.

Nor are we absolutely free in our relations to the material world. Physical laws round about us are more potent than walls in a pri-

Lesson: 2 Pet. ii. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): 1040, 1032, 1004.

son are round about the prisoner. Do, obey, and live: disobey, and die. A man is hedged up in his own nature; and he is hedged up just as much in the world in which he was born, and in which he moves. The laws of society—not enacted and voluntary laws, but inevitable civil laws; those laws which existed prior to all human thought about law, and compelled men to think as they did think; the laws which regulate the act of living together in great masses—these laws can not be set at naught, or be disregarded. Society is not a voluntary compact. You might as well say that men are born on compact, as to say that society is the result of agreements among men. The nature of the individual man could never have been developed except by his position in society. Men are necessary to each other. The faculties would grow dumb and dead, if it were not for that help which they get in the expression of themselves by the fact of civil society. This state of things is the design of God; it is the constituted nature of human life; and the laws that regulate it are imperious. So that man is a creature standing in a circle, once, twice, thrice repeated round about him—laws in his own organization, laws in the material world, and laws in the physical world, which demark the bounds beyond which he can not pass—and all his liberty lies in the small space that remains in the centre. There is a certain liberty which a man can exercise; but the extent of that liberty is very small. It is choosing among imperative things.

All these restraints would *seem* to be restraints upon the sum of life and individual power; but if you analyze it, if you look at it in the root, it will be found that, while there is no such thing as absolute liberty, these restraints all work primarily against the animal nature. All these laws, whether in a man's own self, in his physical relations, or in his relations to his fellows in civil society, are laws which diminish the liberty, primarily and principally, of the passions and the appetites. And by as much as you diminish the power and dominancy of these elements in man, you give power and liberty to the other parts—to his reason, affections, and moral sentiments. So that while a man is restricted at the bottom, he spreads out at the top, and gains again, with amplitude and augmentation, in the higher realms of his being, all that he loses by the restraints and restrictions which are imposed by great cardinal laws upon his lower nature.

He, then, who is self-governed—that is, who accepts his condition, obeys all these laws, and holds himself willingly subject to them—is free; not in the points in which he is restricted, but in other and equivalent directions, in which a man's life is more to him than his basilar life can be.

All these restraints, therefore, in an intelligent and virtuous society, will be found to fall on the animal propensities, and to set free,

by their very limitation, the other part of human nature—its manhood, its divinity.

The more effectually, then, these lower elements are repressed, the more liberty is given to the affections. The degree of liberty attainable by an individual depends upon the restraint which he puts upon the lower nature, and the stimulus which he gives to the higher. The liberty which is attainable by masses of men living together depends on the training that the society which they constitute has had in keeping down the animalism and exalting the true manhood of the citizens in the community. If each man, and all men, have learned self-restraint, then there will be need of but very little restraint on the part of the government; but if self-restraint does not exist in the body of citizens, it must be supplied from without. If men govern the animal that is in them, on which the soul sits astride, like the rider upon his steed, then they are governed. If they will not govern it, it must be governed for them. Government there must be, in some way, if men are going to live together. Society would break up in uproar; it would be like a den of tigers and lions; it would be but a bestial wallow of swine quarreling for their food, and quarreling for their warmth of a winter's night, and quarreling evermore, if there were no government. To live together as men, and in such a way that men can exercise their higher prerogatives, the lower elements of the human organization must be governed. If men would govern these lower elements themselves, there would be no need of bringing in any other instrument of government; but if they will not do it, it must be done by some other agency.

Despotism is the inevitable government of ignorant and savage natures. It is not that the monarch, seeing his power, takes it upon himself to govern the rude in their helplessness; it is this, that the men who represent in themselves only animal qualities are properly governed by absolute government. The animal nature in men must be governed by force, unless they govern it by their own intelligent and free will. Therefore a low and animal condition of national life is properly crowned and dominated by despotism. Under such circumstances it is not a usurpation; it is not a mischief; it is precisely adapted to the work that is to be done. And an indispensable work it is.

Society can not be free, then, except as the reason and the moral sentiments have a sufficient ascendency. You have often heard it said that a free government depends upon the intelligence and virtue of the citizens. This is an empirical fact. It is in accordance with the radical nature of man that it should be so. The first and most important condition of liberty, psychologically stated, is that men should learn how to restrain their lower, basilar, passional

natures, and should be willing to restrain them, and so give liberty to their reason, their affections, and their moral sentiments.

The other condition which we mentioned as indispensable to civil liberty is the possession of the machinery of free civil society. There is to be the presence of laws adapted to that state of things, and there is to be a knowledge of those laws. The methods and limitations by which the popular will is ascertained and expressed; the devices which the experience of ages has invented for the reason and the moral sentiments of the masses to adjudicate and decide questions of public policy; the methods by which a free people execute the purposes which they have determined upon—all these are elements indispensable to liberty. Laws, courts, legislatures, all forms of popular assemblies; freedom of speech, and its proper limitations—these are things which, since we possessed them when we were born, we scarcely have analyzed. They have been of slow growth. It took the world a great while to find out what laws were right and proper for a free people. Ages were employed in experimenting and finding out what was the mode by which a free people might discuss, deliberate upon, and decide their own questions of policy. It has been a slow invention, improved and improving from age to age. The whole retinue of apparatus by which a free people acted in public affairs, executed their laws, expressed their will, and maintained their purposes, has been slowly invented and perfected; and it has risen, in these latter years, so near to the finishing touches, that it may now be said that the world knows how to secure to itself that self-government, and that liberty in it, which it has always been sighing for, and has attempted to gain, but has lost, first because it did not know the psychological conditions on which true civil liberty depended, and second, because it did not know what the machinery was by which society should execute its purposes in liberty.

These two elementary conditions—the moral condition of the people, and the apparatus of civil government adapted to freedom—must unite and coöperate, before there can be any permanent civil liberty in any nation.

On this foundation, I remark,

1. The desire to be free is not a basis broad enough for liberty. It is broad enough for poems, it is broad enough for romances; but it is not broad enough to be a foundation for liberty. The desire to be free, and the art of being free, are two very different things. All men like liberty, if by that expression is meant dislike of restraint; but if the love of liberty means the repression of all one's lower nature, and the education and dominancy of all one's higher nature, then I deny that men desire liberty. If the love of liberty means the willingness of men to restrain that which is oppugnant to their true

manhood, then I say that men are educated to love liberty. The love of liberty is not a primary quality. It is, like virtue and religion, the result of culture in men. To say that a man does not like to be oppressed, is not to say that he loves liberty. If that be liberty, who loves liberty more than the tyrant? If the love of liberty is the desire that you shall have nobody above you, nobody to dictate to you, then the greatest lovers of liberty are the despots, who do not want any body over them, or on either side of them, but who want every body under them. The love of liberty is a virtue. It is a moral inspiration. It carries with it the highest exercise of the reason, and the noblest exercise of the moral sentiments. It is not merely a wild disposition to throw away government; it is a disposition to supersede the necessity of an outward government by the reality of a government within. The natural impulses which we see in savages; the tendencies which we see in individual men—these ought not to be called the love of liberty. They are far removed from it. They are utterly foreign to it.

Let me see a man that loves liberty, and I shall see a man that loves freedom not only for himself, but for others. For that process by which a man learns truly to love liberty in the proper and Christian acceptation of the term, is a process which necessitates the benevolent desire of liberty for others as well as for one's self. And when it takes on this form, mankind and manhood have advanced far along the road of intelligence and true piety.

2. The adoption of free governments by an untrained and unrestrained people will not secure liberty to them. We rejoice at the outbreak of a rebellion against tyranny. I rejoice; you rejoice. Nobody can help it. So badly are the best governments conducted that we get some measure from them of the mischiefs of bad governments. If a good government, a government as good as that at Albany, is so corrupt and abominable; if courts that are so pure and spotless as those of New-York do sometimes trip, what must be the condition of government in communities that do not boast of justice on the Fourth of July half as much as we do? What must it be in Asia? What must it be in Africa? When I see that in a nation where the people are oppressed, the bottom has exploded, and the crude masses have risen up and thrown down their tyrant, I am always glad of it. I am glad, not because I expect the people will be so much better, but because one bad man has got his dues! The gladness consists in the gratification of the instinct of avenging justice, rather than in the conviction that the overthrow of one tyrant, or a dozen, will secure to a people their true liberty. Liberty does not come from machineries, though it uses them, and must have them. You might build a hundred cotton factories in the wilderness where the Indians are,

and the Indians would not on that account be an ingenious and manufacturing people. The manufacturer must precede the machinery, and know how to use it. You might carry cannon, and muskets, and rifles, and endless magazines of ammunition, into the midst of a peace-loving and cowardly nation, and that would not make them a warlike people. The instruments do not make courage, though where there is courage the instruments are indispensable to its use. And where armed tyranny prevails, the whole machinery of free nations substituted in its place does not make the nation free. A nation is not free until it is free in its individual members. Christ makes men free. The spirit of Christ—the spirit of faith, the spirit of self-denial, the spirit of self-government, the spirit of aspiration, the spirit of benevolence—this it is that makes men free. Out of religion there is no such thing as personal freedom; and there can be no such thing as civil freedom outside of the sphere of religion. Oppression goes with the lower nature, and belongs to it, and will break out of it perpetually. These things are conjoined in the divine decree by which creation is as it is. Some think that all that is needed for national emancipation is to throw despotism away, and then to assume the popular government; but we have seen this tried time and time again in the nations of Europe. We have seen nations that rejoiced, and rang their bells, and discharged their artillery, because they had become free, relapse, after a very short time, to the state which they were in before, or even into deeper bondage than they were in before. Free institutions do not make a free people, unless those institutions have grown out of the foregoing freedom of that people. Freedom is inherent in the nature of the population, and not in the institutions of the country.

3. The directest road to civil liberty lies in augmenting the true manhood of a people. You can not make a people free that are ignorant and animal; and, on the other hand, you can not forever keep any people in bondage that are thoroughly educated and thoroughly moral. Schools, virtuous home-training, free religious knowledge, whatever will swell the manhood of the individuals of a nation—these are the means which produce civil liberty. *Liberty* is but another name for augmented manhood. It may grow in a nation under a monarch. England is a monarchy; but England is as free as we are. Germany is a monarchy; but the spirit of liberty is growing larger and larger every year there, and will continue to grow. It is possible for the worst despotism to flourish under the forms of civil liberty. Despotism may thrive under republicanism. And the truest liberty, on the other hand, may be devoloped under the name, under the forms, under the laws, though not under the spirit, of despotism—certainly under a monarchy.

Some men will do more with the poorest tools than other men will do with the most exquisite tools. One man with a jack-knife will beat another man with a whole chest of tools, in the creation of fine things; because it is skill, because it is a subtle vital element, that guides the hand. There may not be many nations in which the people are freer, and in which life and property are safer, than in ours; but there are few cities on the globe where life is so unsafe, and where property is so unsafe—where so much is stolen by direct brutality, and so much more by judicial brutality—as in New-York. And probably there is no place on the earth where life and property are safer, and justice is better executed, than in Paris. In certain respects there is more liberty in that city than in perhaps any other. So that despotism may flourish under republican institutions, and liberty may thrive under monarchical institutions. It illustrates the fact that the nature of civil liberty, and the nature of personal liberty, are to be determined more from the condition of the individuals, than from the importation of names and forms and customs.

If, then, a people are already prepared to be made free, it is a wise thing to supersede their old and waste institutions by reformation, and to establish on their foundations a better system of civil polity, of adjudication, of legislation, and of general government; but if they are not prepared, if they are not educated, the best way to make them free is not to elect a president instead of a king. That may or may not do good. The South-American republics have for a great while elected presidents; and what have they been? Men of straw, if they were presidents; and kings, every inch of them, if they have been good for any thing. They have despotized, if they have ruled. The reason of this has been that the people were not prepared for freedom. They had not developed the liberty of self-restraint in themselves. The men individually did not know how to take care of their passions, and to keep them down. And, like eruptions that make earthquakes if they can not get discharge, and that make volcanoes if they do get discharge, the South-American republics have been a vast crater boiling with revolutions. And so it will be there till education and true religion make more of manhood, and diminish by self-restraint and government the animalism that belongs to the people.

If, therefore, one desires in Europe to sow the seeds of true liberty, I would not say, "Keep back books that teach about the machinery of society." Let them be instructed in those things. But do not rely on those things. Ply the bottom of society with schools. Ply the masses with those things which shall teach them how to live with organization; how to deny themselves; how to live to-day for future periods of time; how to practice the simple virtues; and

how to carry those virtues up to the spiritual forms in which they are to eventuate. He that teaches men how to be true men in Christ Jesus is aiming as straight at liberty as ever any archer that bended the bow aimed at the target.

That is the reason why true preachers are always revolutionary men. To preach a larger manhood is to unsettle, by prophecy, all thrones. For, the moment individual power is augmented in society, the moment men begin to take care of themselves, that moment laws will not be needed, and officers will not be needed, and the whole apparatus of despotism will first become useless, and afterward pass away. Hence, the best way to make liberty is to make better men, better citizens. That was the apostles' method. It would have been premature in their days to have gone into the discussion of civil rights. They aimed directly at making larger, purer, better men. They aimed at the repression of the animal, and the development of the moral sentiments. They aimed at putting down the flesh, with all its evils, and bringing up the spirit, with all its virtues. To put down the flesh is to put down despotism, the world over; and to bring up the spirit is to bring up freedom, the world over. Therefore, where there has been an unrestricted, pure, evangelical preaching of the word of God, there has inevitably followed civil liberty; and whenever men have wished to check civil liberty, they have checked the preaching of the Gospel; they have shut up the Bible; they have substituted human creeds for divine teaching; they have kept down those things which promote public knowledge and public virtue.

Propagandism, then, though it may have some limited and relative use, is not the great highway toward liberty among an oppressed people; but education is. That is the direct road to freedom.

When Moses had brought the people out of the land of Egypt, the shortest cut to their journey's end was only a day's march; but they were not fit to go into the promised land. If they had gone in then, they would have gone in like a set of wolves, wrangling and quarreling all the way. And so the Lord turned them back. He made an academy of the sands. And for forty years they were kept in the desert, till all the hoary heads that could not learn had died, and learned of the grave, and all the younger men had been brought under the influence of a commonwealth—for the commonwealth of the desert was a grand pattern of the commonwealths of modern times. And then, after forty years of teaching, they were taken into the promised land. It required forty years of teaching in coördinate life, in self-government, in justice and humanity, and in purity, to prepare them for civil liberty.

And so it will be with nations. You can not take a nation

straight into its liberties, any more than you can take a boy straight into knowledge. You must first send him to the common school; and he must stay there a year or two. Then you must send him to the academy; and he must stay there three or four years. Then he must go into the college, and stay there three or four years longer. And when he leaves the college, what does he know? He is a sciolist, and a beginner. After that he must spend two or three years in acquiring his profession. And when he has devoted twelve or fifteen years to study, he has a right to begin life. And he will bear witness that then he is but a beginner.

You can not force knowledge into a man; and just as little can you force liberty into men. It is a thing of development. It is a thing that can not be brought into a man or a nation, but that has to be wrought out of the elements of the man, or of the nation. Make men's limbs so large that there is not iron enough to go around them. Make men's muscles, like Samson's, so strong that withes and cords are like flax touched with fire when they strain them. That will cure bondage; and that is the best way to cure it. Make men larger; make them measure more about the girt of the conscience, and less around the animalism, and then you can not oppress them.

No government is strong enough, even at this stage of the world's progress—in Europe, certainly—to withstand the rising of the public sentiment of a nation. It was Tocqueville who said that all governments would be just as rascally as the people would let them be; and there never was a truer thing said by a wiser man. Yet, even Napoleon, with the imperial power of the strongest, and in many respects the most civilized nation on the globe—for the French people are preëminently a people of genius, of ingenuity, of wit, in the larger sense of the term—even Napoleon, with the vast power that he has, can not defy public sentiment, and is obliged to let out his armor. He is obliged to insert into the government a gore here, and a gore there, to keep it large enough. The people are growing so fast that the government does not fit them; and they will split it unless he enlarges it. And so, not because he likes it, I suppose, but because he likes to maintain his supremacy, and because that is the only condition on which he can do it, he is making his government, little by little, freer and freer. But that freedom came from the people. It was the necessity of fitting his government to them that led to his making it larger and looser.

Even despotisms—with the exception of the Roman, which is the stupidest as well as the worst—are obliged to consider the wishes of their subjects, and push them on the side of civilization. And all civilization, all true intelligence, all true virtue, all true religion, is antagonistic to tyranny, is deadly to despotism. Make men better,

and you are certainly preparing to make the people to which they belong freer. And that is the royal road to freedom. "Christ shall make you free," is just as true in its civil relation as in its application to the individual.

4. Modern nations, with a certain degree of civilization, are all tending to civil liberty; and *democracy*, as it is called, is inevitable. This is admitted by all heads, crowned as well as others. It is only a question as to how long a time will be required to bring about the result. Before the day dawned, or in its twilight, even, Tocqueville, who was the most far-seeing prophet, as it were, of his time, did not believe that democracy was the best thing for the world; but he declared that it was inevitable, and that, as a choice of evils, it was best for all governments to adapt themselves to the necessity. I hold that democracy—not democracy in that soiled and draggled use of the term which belongs to American politics, but democracy as the representation of something higher than the thief's lore and the beast's brutality; democracy as representing a large, Christian idea—I hold that this is the blessed angel of God that is flying over the nations with trumpet in hand, and proclaiming the final victories of Christ in the world. Through much tribulation, through much blood, through wars and revolutions, these victories are to come; nevertheless there is a certainty of their coming. The universal brain is showing itself to be mightier than the class brain. The crowned head must give way to the thinking head of the millions.

In this tendency, the first step should be popular intelligence, or real growth at the bottom of society. Then the institutions of liberty will come, gradually, themselves. But when by violent revolutions the free machinery of civil liberty precedes the other element of civil liberty—namely, the education of the people—it will stand, if time can only be secured for the people to be educated, and to rise up to the proper use of their civil institutions; but if this can not be secured, then the mere importation of the machinery of a free government will do them no good.

Let me apply these ideas to special instances.

The growth of liberty in England is one of the most important studies for a Christian philosopher. I regard no one feature in our time so striking as this. And no one event in our age is more striking than the fact of our great war, and the results of it in the development of the spirit of liberty, and of faith in it, among the nations of the earth. It has both its material and its moral side; but the power of a people to stand around and strengthen a government, the power put into the hands of a government by a people, when they themselves make that government, and when it expresses them, is one of the lessons that is most strikingly illustrated. No crowned

head—not even the Czar himself—could have put a million men along a base of a thousand miles, and sustained them with ever-growing strength, and more and more skill and potency, through four years of war. No exchequer of any monarch could ever stand the drain to which the treasury of this government was subjected, and which was supplied by the taxation and labor of a free people. All Europe predicted our bankruptcy. My own ears heard it. Manchester and Liverpool and London said to me, "Oh! your money is but paper. Besides, you are only a democracy; and what is property in a democracy? Do you suppose your people will bear taxation?" I said to them, "There is no people on earth that will bear such taxation as a people that tax themselves. Your government came down to your people, and they do not like it, and they do not like to be taxed to support it; and the life of your government depends on light taxes. But our people do like their government, and they are willing to be taxed, and heavily taxed, if necessary, for its support. Our government represents the living want and the present judgment of our people, and they shrink from no self-sacrifice which may be required for its preservation." And we said to Europe, "There is no such power in the world as in the arms of a free people, and there are no such resources as such a people's exchequer." "Ah! but," said they, "you have banked up this mighty power; you have collected your forces; your men have come forward voluntarily and filled the mountain-tops with their masses; but wait till the war ceases, and then, when your armies begin to melt, avalanches will come on you, destroying valleys and burying villages. You will be overwhelmed with rapine and waste." Like the snows on our hills, the armies melted and flowed into streams which had a momentary freshet, and then passed away; and the most part sank into the soil, to nourish the grass and the flowers. And Europe has beheld a million men disbanded without a riot.

Nay, more. Our generals, and the most eminent of them, have abundantly proved themselves true lovers of true government, without ambition. Major-generals are colonels now. None of them mourn. Although the difference of salary might be a convenience, I never heard of a single man who, either from ambition or from avarice, proposed, by any plot or any device, to do other than be a good citizen. They have folded their wide-spread wings, and they sit quiet as doves. And Europe has beheld it.

And gradually this vast national debt, that had but one superior, is wasting and wasting away. The taxation of this people is a bungling machinery; but clumsy as it is, unequal and oppressive as it is, the spirit of popular justice in this land not only bears it, but insists upon it, because it is the will of this people that the national

debt, which was the sacrifice offered by them for the unity of this country, should be paid. It was the price of supporting our boys—your sons and mine; it was the price of maintaining the young men of the nation, in the great struggle through which we have passed; and he that repudiates that debt dishonors the grave of every patriot who sleeps beneath the sod. And it will not be done.

Now, do you suppose that a great nation like this, that stretches from ocean to ocean, that listens to the thunder of two seas, over which deep calls unto deep, that owns every latitude, that has the tropics and the zones, to the very frigid zone, in its hand—do you suppose that a nation so strong and large as this is, and representing the spirit of Christianized liberty, can stand up before Europe and not foment discontent among her people, and breed in them desires for liberty? Their mistake will be likely to consist in this, that they will undertake to have first our government, and then our liberty. They must have our people's training first, and then the machinery of our government will come as fast as they can use it.

Unbeknown to them—that is, by divine providence, rather than by the wit and foresight of man—just that training is going on. It takes its first development in the trades unions, and coöperative societies, and labor associations of the common people. Often in the history of this world have people failed in the thing that they set out to do, and done a greater good which they never thought of. Men, for the sake of raising wages, are forming themselves into combinations —into clubs, and unions, and coöperative associations; and, whatever may be the industrial effect of these combinations, the social and moral effect is going to be very significant. One thing is certain, that the men who are coöperating in this way are learning self-denial. They are no longer spending money for personal indulgence. They form themselves into a common council for the promotion of public ends. They are being trained to republicanism. There is a republic formed within a monarchy; a democracy within a kingdom. And every association where men work industriously, using only a part of their earnings to support themselves, and giving the rest for the furtherance of a public end, although that end may not be as high as it might be, is a school in which men are trained to suppress their animal nature. It is not a great military drill-ground; but, better than that, it is a great social drill-ground.

Why, one of the most significant events that ever took place in Europe fell almost dead. I never heard it proclaimed. I never heard the bells rung in commemoration of it. I could have rung the old "Liberty Bell" with a will, if I had had hold of the rope, when I heard of it. It was a congress of working-men in Brussels, in

which a resolution was passed that the interest of the working classes demanded peace, and not war, in Europe. Previous to that time the great unthinking rabble, easily fired in their passions, had been ready to follow this or that ambitious leader, and devastate nations. And they destroyed whom? Nobles? The rich classes? Their oppressors? No. They cut their own natural brethren's throats. For the mass of armies are working-men. It is the farmer that shoots down the farmer; it is the mechanic that slays the mechanic; it is the peasant that kills the peasant. And as soon as working-men begin to see that the interests of working-men in France, in Germany, in Austria, in Italy, in Spain, in every country of Europe, and in America, are identical, and that war is but the way in which their oppressors destroy them, without weakening oppression, they will set their faces against war. And when the masses of laboring men say "Peace," kings and emperors will be obliged to say "Peace." Europe heard the empty Napoleon say, "The empire is peace," and laughed; but when the men of the hammer and the men of the saw said, "Europe must have peace," all men paused and pondered. That was not an unmeaning sound. It was the silent and low-toned utterance of God's prophecy, speaking from the common people, among whom Christ was born, and to whom his ministry was given. Christ was a poor man, and he brought the Gospel to the poor. And again, civilization is waking up among the poor. The signs of the times in Europe are most auspicious—and particularly in this, that there is silently coming up among the laboring classes there a higher average of intelligence, and a stronger disposition to be men. And this disposition to be men, which we see practically carried out through Europe, will develop in this age greater results than were ever dreamed of.

We have lived so fast that we do not know what things have taken place. That Italy is a kingdom, is enough to fill one's lifetime with wonder. Italy, the contempt of ages, shattered, dismembered, weakened, corrupted, has gained health and virtue at the bottom enough to cohere as a kingdom, and reëstablish herself. Spain has vomited the Bourbons out. She had not, but a short time ago, stamina enough to vomit. But Spain is not yet free. Not till those fair valleys hear the ring of the free-church bell on the Sabbath, and the echo of it—the common-school bell—every day through the week; not until the newspaper goes into the household; not until her men and women learn the hearty love of work which is one of the civilizers of the globe, will Spain be fully prepared for ample liberty. But it is coming. The Spaniards learn slowly, but they never forget any thing—otherwise many of their faults would have been forgotten. At any rate, Spain is not ready for liberty. If she was, she would not

attempt to take it away from the fairest island that belongs to her crown.

And as it is in Europe, so it is in Cuba, to which I have alluded, and which is in all men's mouths. The Cubans are making a strife more, I think, to throw off oppression, than because they have learned liberty. Nevertheless, throwing off oppression is worth the struggle. The strife itself is an education. It is developing them and teaching them how to act for themselves. In France, in the earlier periods, the army was the best school. The peasant was sent away a clod, and he came back a man well developed in many respects. He had traveled much, and seen many countries, and had learned punctuality, and obedience, and aptness of foot and hand, and acuteness of eye and ear. There was no other means by which a man in France could learn so much. And conscription in France, which in one respect has been a great mischief, in another respect has been a great bounty. So war is oftentimes an education. And if the Cubans have long enough to study the things which shall make them valiant, and teach them to coördinate their lives, the war which they are waging will be a benefit to them. If they throw off their oppression, and gain the right to be men, they will doubtless take on some form of free government; but with that they will need to have something else. They will need a higher state of manhood in the family and in the individual. Schools, churches, books, and papers will be worth more to them than any other institutions, at present. My heart is in that conflict, as it is in any conflict in which a people are struggling for liberty; and, so long as they are rising up for a better manhood, whether they are half prepared or wholly prepared for it, and whether they know what it is or not, and whether or not they know the road to it, I am with them, and pray for them. And though my expectation may not run with theirs, and I may not believe that they will attain as much as they sanguinely believe they will, yet I am on their side. Every man who is unwilling to be a beast, and is trying, even in the most awkward and round-about way, to be a fuller man, has, I believe, had breathed on him the influence of the Holy Ghost—the spirit of inspiration and elevation; and my heart goes out toward him. May every blow that the Cubans strike go home; and may the God that rules the winds and the waves, with the stars in heaven, again fight against Sisera. May he cause great natural laws to work for them.

Still, our government is right in all it is doing in regard to the Cubans. We have no business to fit out privateering expeditions to help them. It would be just as wicked as it was for the Alabama to be fitted out in the port of Liverpool. And the government ought to be as vigilant as it can, in preventing these expeditions

from going out; but the Cubans ought to be more cunning than the government, and get them out anyhow! I want the expeditions to go, and I want the Cubans to have powder, and rifles, and artillery, and men; and yet I want the government honestly and earnestly, without winking or blinking, to maintain their proper duties as a nation among the nations of the earth. So I am on the side of the government *decidedly;* and I am on the side of the Cubans *decidedly!*

But when the Cubans shall have gained the liberty to think, and to speak, and to form their own government, I shall not feel that they are free. I shall not feel that Cuba is free because she has struck down the Spanish flag and hoisted her own. Let me see that she has struck down the animal and hoisted the divine, and then I shall feel that her people are free. Then Christ will have made them free; and when Christ has made them free, they will be free indeed.

And that which is true of this fair isle, and of this struggle, is just as true of Crete; is just as true of Greece; is just as true of Egypt; is just as true of all the different nationalities that are properly striving for their liberty.

But remember that if the institutions of liberty precede the development of it in the individual, unless time is given them to educate themselves in the use of the instruments of liberty, it will do them no good. Men must become free, first by learning how to govern themselves, and then by learning how to use the instruments of civil liberty; and then they will have a liberty that will stand. When the nations of the earth have learned to be free on such conditions as these, I know not why national life should ever run out; I know not why nations should not exist for thousands and tens of thousands of years. The analogies between the life of a tree and the life of an individual are but poetic illustrations; and there are no analogies of national life. I do not see why it may not flow on and last as long as the ocean, or as long as the sun and moon; but the conditions which I have stated are the conditions on which it must stand.

In regard to our selves, my own augury for the future is a pleasing one. I believe that education is to augment its power. We are educating better, as well as more widely. Both the science and the art of educating are rising in this land. And I believe that the spirit of religion itself is growing. There is a superficial strife going on among the instruments of religion; each one of the various churches is making a desperate effort to maintain itself and its own form; and I look with the utmost complacency and good-will upon them all. I know that God loves Episcopacy, and Presbyterianism, and Methodism, and Baptism, and Congregationalism. I know that

all the organizations which have for their end the augmentation of moral principle in this world are divinely favored, and that they will be prospered in proportion to the industry and perseverance of the men who manage them. If they choose to have a little by-play among themselves, that will perhaps somewhat delay their progress; but it will not make much difference. The Lord's church is bigger than any church that men's hands ever formed. There is no wall that can contain the church of God on earth; and there is no sect-line that can reach around it. The Lord's garment is large enough to cover all sects, and to leave room for nations to camp under it besides.

I am not sorry to see the Roman Church spread. I think it a great deal better than nothing. And there are influences that are modifying it. It has on its back, you know, all the faults and sins of a thousand years; and it can not carry them forever.

When Oxford refused to allow Newton's *Principia* to be taught, teaching Aristotle's falsities, they taught "Aristotle on Cosmogony, with Notes," and the notes confuted the text all the way through. And so, little by little, they got the liberty in Oxford to teach the true doctrine. The result is, that Aristotle has gone under, and Newton is in the ascendency.

There are a thousand errors which the university of Rome is carrying; but in intelligent and republican America the notes will gradually grow, and the text will gradually shrink; and by and by Rome will not be any worse than High Episcopacy. It is not much worse now. The union is nearly complete. And in the judgment of intelligent men both will be considered as human devices, and as good for what they do. The idea that any church form was derived directly from God, and is the only true pattern of a church, is losing its hold upon men's minds, and is bound to die out. Every religious institution on the face of the globe is of human origin; and men are coming to feel this more and more. Let this be preached; let a few men say it boldly in every great city; let the light of truth be thrown by a few men on the fact that all institutions of religion are human, and that only the principle of religion is divine, and churches will become innocuous in this respect. Let every church do the best it can, and show what it is worth by the results which it produces.

I look forward, then, in our own land, with joyful anticipations. Religion, in the main, is growing more and more powerful. It does not exist so much in doctrinal forms as it has in some ages of the world, because doctrinal forms are not so much demanded now a they were then. Ecclesiasticism is not so popular in this country as it has been, and it will not long be so popular as it is now. Religion may not grow in the way in which men have been accustome

to think of it; but the essential principle of religion—the belief in the real God; the belief in a divine order of events; the belief in justice and truth; the belief in sympathy and true philanthropy; the belief in self-denial; the recognition of the hatefulness of selfishness, and the wickedness of cruel pride—there never was a period in the history of the world when this was so truly prevalent as now. Men believe in the essential spirit of the Gospel, and are carrying it out better in the family, and are carrying it out better in communities. Bad as much of legislation is, it is but temporary. The evils which we see are but symptoms; and they are curable symptoms. Legislation, on the whole, taking it from twenty-five years to twenty-five years, averages better and better. Jurisprudence has a better outlook. And knowledge never was so free, and never ran so little in the direction of power and craft, and never worked so much for the amelioration of the social and civil conditions of the people, as it does to-day.

We have our dangers. The world would not be fit to live in if there were not dangers in it. Dangers are God's whetstones with which to keep men sharp. Men are ground by difficulties. Wealth, if it runs toward the animal passions, is a great danger; but if wealth runs toward the higher sentiments, it is a beneficent power. And blessed be God for wealth! I could almost preach on the duty of being rich—though I could not practice my own preaching in that respect, any more than in many others! There is a mighty power for good in wealth, if it goes with the judgment and the moral sense. If it makes the foundations deeper and broader, and the superstructure better, of the rational nature of man, then blessed be wealth. It is a part of God's omnipotence.

Luxury men are afraid of. So am I, if it is pigs' luxury; but not if it is angelic luxury. I believe there will be conditions in which there will be more luxury than was ever dreamed of in this world Luxury that works toward beauty, toward refinement, toward elevation, toward simplicity, toward exquisiteness, is blessed. Men say, "There is less necessity of work, and therefore there is more leisure." Well, blessed be God for leisure. I hate laziness, and love leisure. He whose feet rest, and whose hands no longer toil, may keep the golden wheels of the mind working all the more. The highest products of life are not those which are found in warehouses. Better than these are books, pictures, statues—the various elements which belong to intellectual life, and which leisure breeds. There can be no high civilization where there is not ample leisure. And as you go toward the spiritual world, there will be more leisure and less laziness.

In this great development, all those men who work to stimulate

the animal passions of society are the traitors. They are the men who are undermining our prosperity. Every man that teaches men to be gluttons, to be intemperate, or to be licentious; every man that is bawling for liberty, meaning the liberty of the beast, the liberty of man's lower nature, is a traitor. Such men are destroying self-restraint, and are destroying, therefore, the foundations on which liberty must stand.

The men and women that are patriots—who are they? Mothers who are bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—they are writing better Declarations of Independence than ever Thomas Jefferson inscribed. Humble fathers who are training their children in essential manliness, in self-reliance, in independence, making them ashamed to beg, and proud to rely upon their own resources—they are patriots. They are lovers of our country. The humble schoolmistress that gathers her summer brood and pours her refined life into the bosom of these rustics—she is a patriot. The schoolmaster, who stands nearer to the work of God in the world, and in our age, than even the minister himself does—he is the patriot. The editor, that is taking knowledge, and giving to it multiform wings, and setting it flying round and round the world—he is the patriot. Those men who augment the substantial qualities of manhood—the preachers of the Gospel; the humble missionary; the colporteur; the devoted Christian in every neighborhood—those men who are working for the spiritual development of man—they are God's truest patriots. They, of every name, everywhere, who make men larger, are working for liberty; and they who are demoralizing men, and making license turn into lust and belluine appetites, are the devil's instruments, and are working for bondage and for despotism.

God speed the right; and from year to year, as this Fourth of July comes round, and the national inspiration swells the young heart, God grant that there may be an expression that shall be better than the firing of crackers, or the discharge of noisy guns. These are all well enough in their way; but may the Fourth of July, in every decade of years, to us and to our children, mean more than, "We have broken the bondage of England." May it mean, more and more, "We have broken the yoke of Satan, and have trodden under foot the passions and the appetites; and Christ has made us free."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, Almighty God! for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. For the knowledge of thy word, for the influence of those institutions which have grown out of it, and which express its spirit; for the nurture and culture of home; for all the sweet affections that have been developed and trained; for the blessedness of the estate into which we are born of liberty; and for all the generous influences which are springing up round about us, we render thee thanksgiving and praise. If we look upon our circumstances, and the surrounding influences, we marvel that we are not more grateful; we marvel that we are not more generous to others. Surely thou hast given us the power by which easily we might overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. Forbid that we should take all our privileges as a power for greater selfishness. Forbid that we should take all the beneficent influences that surround us to make ourselves worse therewith. Deliver us, we beseech of thee, from the temptations of avarice and greediness. Deliver us from worldly-mindedness. Deliver us from all ambitions that are within and beneath the horizon. May we have aspirations for manhood more than for outward abundance. May we long, not for the honor which cometh from men, but for that greater honor which cometh from God. May we seek to found our estates and to build our houses, not alone where time and storm and disaster have power, but higher, in that blessed realm where storm can never come; where there is for us a house whose Builder and whose Maker is God—our Father's house.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that we may live with a full understanding of thy providence. May we move willingly in the channels which thou hast appointed, and where thou art carrying the current of affairs. May we be wise to understand the times in which we live. May we side evermore with the things that are the most virtuous; that most belong to liberty and purity; that are most filled with the spirit of beneficence and of God.

We pray that we may be delivered from unbelief; that we may not worship the world, and laws, which are but thy servants. May we learn more and more to believe in thee, and to worship thee, and to be framed on the pattern and image of our God. And we pray that thou wilt bless this nation—all the States that are in it, and all the institutions which belong to its wide-spread limits.

Thou hast in times past indicated thy providence, and hast been a wonder-working God in our midst, and hast brought us out of great perils and threatenings, and planted our feet upon the rock.

Grant that this nation, moulded and preserved, and in these latter days rescued and reëstablished by thy providence, may live, not to corrupt itself, nor to burst out in arrogant power. Grant that intelligence may prevail, and reason predominate over passion, and virtue belong to this great community. And may beneficent, yearning desires for the up-building of the weak, in us take the place of oppression and of overleaping ambition. Grant that it may be ours to nourish, ours to bless, ours to secure release, and not ours to imprison. May it be ours to enlarge, and not to restrict.

We pray that thou wilt make thy Gospel powerful, everywhere, to restrain passion; to inspire men with self-government; to teach them to respect their brethren in the great brotherhood of mankind.

And we pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. Grant to them liberty, and the foundations on which it may stand and build.

And grant that thy kingdom may come everywhere, and that thy will may be done, and the whole earth see thy salvation.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of instruction that we have spoken. Wilt thou by the household teach us more and more perfectly the way in which thou dost cause nations to walk. May the way of the Lord be laid and cast up, and may the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

Remember the poor and the ignorant of our own land. Remember those who have been recently emancipated, and who are struggling and groping in the midnight darkness of ignorance. They are called *men*, but grant that they may find out the hidden meaning of that word. They are called to liberty; but teach them divinely the act of being free. May they be guarded from wrong. May they be instructed in schools and in churches, and be brought to the full possession of that which they have in name.

Look, we beseech of thee, upon the outlying population, and upon the emigrants that are scattered up and down through our land. We pray that everywhere schools may keep pace with emigration, and churches preside over schools; and that this whole land may be Christian and intelligent.

And look upon the nations and the islands of the sea. Be with those that are seeking a nobler manhood. Still correct their ideal. Still guard them from the dangers that are in them, as well as the outward dangers which threaten them. And build up all the nations of the earth. Destroy tyrants by making men too mighty—too free and virtuous—for them. And may the whole earth, at last, rounded out into Christian knowledge, developed into Christian virtue, with Christ proclaimed, rest and rejoice. And heaven and earth united will send forth the final anthem of praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

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PHILADELPHIA, April 27, 1868.

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